

Head Quarters Cheney's Battery,  
Army of the Potomac May 18. 1862.

My Dear Wife

Your letter of 8th inst. came to hand  
last night, and as ever, I was very glad to hear  
from you, though you was not in quite as good  
spirits as usual. I suppose because you thought  
I was not receiving your letters. Well May, the  
letters have all been received, and come along  
quite regularly now, so that you may not worry  
about that. Jim has been a little negligent about  
writing, and I have him a regular blowing up,  
though it is a good deal of a task to write in  
Camp. He will write today and often in future.  
If I am sick, or wounded you will be informed at  
once, so you may not expect me to keep anything  
of the kind from you. We had heavy skirmishing  
yesterday, and some firing this morning, and a  
general engagement must come very soon, I think  
about tomorrow. You will undoubtedly hear of the  
result before you receive this and if I am  
wounded a request will be made to have  
a telegraphic despatch sent to you at once, as  
I believe that even should I get wounded, it  
would be better for you to know it at once  
than to live in suspense. If Jim or Joseph  
should be wounded the same shall be done at



earliest possible moment. I have long since learned  
to take better care of my health than in former years,  
and I now see the benefit of it, and have no  
fears of sickness. We lose more men from disease  
than in battle, and I am inclined to think  
5 to one. Our Surgeon says we have less sickness  
than any other Company, except one, and that is  
Willard, Battery, Co A of Chicago, who were the  
first Bat in the field from Illinois, and have  
got used to the climate &c. Maj Willard of Chicago  
is Chief of Artillery in our Division, and we  
are under his command. I like the Maj very well  
and think we will stand a fair show in his  
report to General Wallace. I will continue to write  
you just as often as possible and hope you may  
be fortunate enough to receive my letters. I wish  
I could step in and see you all, and particularly  
Jon and the Children. They are a treasure under  
any circumstances, but under present circum-  
stances, what a treasure to you. I am glad to know  
that Grace knows me, as it would be too bad  
to come home and have her afraid of me. I  
am glad Royce is learning well and hope he  
may be strong and healthy, if he should not  
I would advise that he be taken out of school,  
though you know what is best about all these  
matters. I am glad to hear that you are getting out



round, to the Post Office. Waverly &c and would  
advise that you get out just as much as you can  
for it is far better than to sit and watch my  
Photograph. I confidently expect to get home before the  
snow flies to get home, and stay at home, as I  
cannot see how the Rebel Army can be kept  
together long if we whip them at Corinth, which  
we are bound to do, and then stay. I think that  
as highly as I have always appreciated home &  
family, I will appreciate it still more highly.  
It would probably be impossible for me to get a  
Furlough, and if I could, I doubt if I would do  
it, as I do not feel as though I would fancy  
coming home to stay a short time, and then break  
away again, so you may not expect to see me till  
we are mustered out of the service. The weather  
is still fine and roads good except most awfully  
dusty. My dinner is ready and I will eat and  
then finish. I have had some steamed Peas, Rye Bread,  
Fried Potatoes, Corn Sobster, (which reminded me of the last one  
we ate together in Worcester) and Pickles. I have just  
learned that the firing yesterday was to get possession  
of a Creek that the Rebels had been rising to water  
Stock at. It seems they had quite a force there  
and 75 head of Cattle were driven down to water,  
when a Brigade under command of Gen Smith made  
a dash at them and after a hard fought battle



Letter to you as far as I can write every one. Frank's is wanting to get the letters to take to the office. He says night and some heart & spirit's attack you. Some it was never  
John

The Rebels were repulsed with considerable loss of life, and their 75 head of Cattle also their favorite watering place. The 8th Mo lost 8 killed & 20 wounded. have not heard from the other Regiments. This afternoon Capt Cogswell of Ottawa, Capt Wallace, brother to Gen Wallace, Lieut Bantam & myself are going to take a ride out to the front. When I come in I will write you if I see anything of interest. I have been to Gen Wallace's Head Quarters & he refused to give me a pass to go to the front, as he had just let one Artillery Capt go, and he said if any Battery was called for today, mine would go, so you see I am checked out of my ride. Well I have had a supper of Beans, good bread, (salt rising) maple Sugar, and a good cup of tea. It is a fine evening and if I could take my family, and take a stroll into the woods it would be a pleasure indeed, but all is well that ends well, so I will not allow myself to think of it more than I can possibly help, and when we are reunited we will talk over matters, home matters &c to our hearts content. Give my love to every one of our friends and relatives, and say to them that the reason I do not write to them personally is not because they are forgotten, but because my first duty is to my family, and they must consider such